



Quarterly Report
INDONESIA: ESTABLISHING DEMOCRATIC CIVILIAN
CONTROL OF THE MILITARY IN INDONESIA
USAID Grant No. AEP-A-00-98-00014-00
January 1 through March 31, 2001

I. SUMMARY

In the first quarter of 2001, NDI's program on governance and security in Indonesia continued to encourage public discussion and debate on defense and security issues by disseminating information on proposed defense legislation to local journalists. The Institute also initiated a partnership with the Institute of Investigative Journalism (IJ) and began planning for a third journalists' training course. In late February NDI staff experts conducted an assessment of the Institute's journalist training program and a feasibility study of proposed regional dialogues between military officers and civilians in several provinces. Finally, planning meetings regarding a potential partnership continued with Aksara Foundation after a brief hiatus following Blair King's departure and the arrival of his replacement, Jerome Cheung.

II. BACKGROUND

The state of civil-military relations has always been an important measure of the quality of a democracy. This is particularly true in Indonesia, which has a checkered history on both fronts: democracy and civil-military relations. Indonesia experienced nine years of parliamentary democracy (1950-1959) during a period in its political development characterized by recent independence, economic stagnation, and regional rebellions. As a result of these challenges and the fragmented party system, cabinets rarely lasted more than a year. In 1959, with the military's support, President Soekarno declared the executive-dominant 1945 Constitution back in force. This event heralded 39 years of authoritarian government that ended only with President Soeharto's resignation on May 21, 1998.

The Indonesian National Military (TNI) has always viewed itself as a military of the people, with an important role as a force for national unity. This belief is rooted in the military's role in gaining independence for Indonesia from the Netherlands between 1945 and 1949, and was later articulated in greater scope and detail as the ideology of *dwi fungsi* (dual functions). *Dwi fungsi*, unique in its ideological sophistication and historical justification, is the doctrine that specifically mandates a political and social role for the Indonesian military, in addition to the traditional military function of external defense.

President Soeharto and the Indonesian military used *dwi fungsi* during the New Order regime to justify the military's extensive role in politics and the withering of civilian control of the military. The resulting widespread corruption and human rights abuses have damaged the military's claims to popular legitimacy and thus compromised its credibility with both the political elite and the general public in Indonesia. This remains a serious problem for the sustainability of a democratic transition in Indonesia, both for military and civilian leaders.

Since May 1998, modest gains have been made in the reform of the military. The police have been separated from the military as a first step toward decreasing the military's role in internal security and domestic affairs. TNI has diminished the role of the social-political affairs office and ended the practice of *kekaryaan*, the placement of active or retired officers in the civilian bureaucracy. Moreover, then-Armed Forces Commander and Minister of Defense and Security, General Wiranto, declared that the military would remain neutral during the June 1999 legislative elections, and it seems to have done so.

Despite his early success, President Abdurrahman Wahid's attempts to reform the military have been marred by his highly personal (rather than institutional) approach. He promoted a Navy admiral as military commander and has filled other openings with Air Force marshals. In January 2000, President Wahid removed military spokesman Major General Sudrajat from his position after Sudrajat publicly questioned the president's authority as the commander-in-chief. Most prominently, after several weeks of a war of words, in February 2000 Wahid removed General Wiranto from his position as Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security after an Indonesian human rights commission implicated him in the violence in East Timor. However, his attempts to promote outspoken, reformist general Agus Wirahadikusumah, the commander of Kostrad (the army's strategic forces), were thwarted through intense lobbying to Vice-President Megawati by senior officers. General Agus was sidelined and Megawati gained favor within TNI. Recently, with his political support among civilian politicians eroding, President Wahid increasingly has looked for support within the military. The deteriorating relationship between Wahid and the DPR and the resulting rise in political tensions and uncertainty has contributed to an increase in TNI's political influence since June 2000.

Concrete steps to reduce the military's role in politics on an institutional basis have been met with mixed success. The military retains appointed seats in the national legislature and regional assemblies through 2004, though the number is half those held during the New Order, and now an MPR decree assures their presence in the MPR through 2009. Many retired and some active officers remain seconded to civilian posts in the bureaucracy until their current terms expire. The Ministry of Defense, while headed by a civilian politician is still largely staffed by active military personnel. A new bill on defense, which received input from civil society, is making its way slowly through parliament but may encounter opposition from the TNI/police members.

TNI's commitment to remain outside of politics is even unclear. While there are signs that certain senior officers within TNI are committed to the professionalization and de-politicization of the corps, the events of the last quarter may signal a revitalized influence in politics. TNI's rejection of President Wahid's efforts to declare a State of Emergency and freeze parliament in February 2001 could be interpreted as a commitment of the armed forces to remain

loyal to the constitution and to distance itself from parliament's struggle with the embattled president. However, it is no secret that many senior officers in the military strongly favor efforts to remove Wahid and have been frequently meeting with Vice-President Megawati. Whether this signals a political maneuver or not, it is clear that February's vote against Wahid re-establishes TNI as a political player. Ironically, it will be civilian politicians who will be sorely tested to resist seeking political alliances with the military as the tensions between the legislative and executive branches continue to escalate and the presidential censure – and possible impeachment – process reaches its conclusion.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. Program Assessment Mission and Regional Dialogue Feasibility Study

From February 21 to the March 7, NDI conducted an assessment of the Institute's training programs for journalists and a feasibility study of proposed regional civil-military dialogues. The purpose of the mission was to assess the impact of NDI's security education workshops for journalists and to assess the feasibility of conducting a series of regional dialogues on civil-military relations in several provinces outside of Java.

NDI staff met with a variety of prominent Indonesians with expertise in civil-military affairs in Indonesia, including: journalists, NGO leaders, military officers, and political observers. Among these figures were: human rights activist Hendardi (PBHI), conflict expert Bob Clarke (American Friends Service Committee), TNI generals Saurip Kadi and Agus Widjojo, policy advocate Hari Prihatono (Propatria), policy advocate Daud Sinjal (Aksara Foundation), legal expert Nono Makarim (Aksara Foundation), military expert Rizal Sukma (CSIS), military expert Bob Lowry (ICG), US military attaché Col. Joe Daves, *Tempo* editor Bambang Harymurti, *KOMPAS* R&D Director Daniel Dhakidae, *DETAK* military journalist Hendrajit, Secretary-General of the Indonesian Alliance of Journalists Didiks Supriyanto, Rizal Darmaputra and Beni Sukadis from the NGO LESPERSI, Mad Ridwan and Nashrun Marzuki from the Indonesian Institute for Investigative Journalism. The NDI staff also met a dozen alumni of the civil-military journalist training. Finally, the NDI staff met with USAID-OTI Director Michael Stievater, USAID-OTI Project Development Manager Marcus Mietzner and USAID Political Analyst Rodd McGibbon.

The NDI journalist-training program has received a great deal of positive feedback from both former participants and observers of the media. Program alumni informed us that due to their participation in the NDI program it is now easier for them to obtain interviews with military officers. These officers believe that journalists who have participated in the NDI program are more likely to cover their story in a fair and balanced manner. Many journalist alumni who returned to their newsrooms filled with an eagerness to report in more detail on civil-military relations found, however, that their editors were not interested in covering security and defense issues. The journalists suggested that in the future NDI include editors in this training program to raise their awareness and increase the possibility of greater and more accurate coverage of military and security issues.

Discussions regarding the feasibility of regional dialogues indicate that this is a less than opportune time to undertake such an activity. The majority of the individuals interviewed acknowledged that the state of civil-military relations in Indonesia has deteriorated and, while there are difficult and important civil-military issues to be resolved at the local level, NDI should continue to concentrate it's work at the national level. There are two reasons for this: 1) TNI decision-making remains firmly in the capitol and local commanders follow Jakarta's lead on political issues and, 2) NGOs in the provinces may be reluctant to address military issues due to fear of retribution.

2. Discussions with Aksara Foundation to engage in advocacy to DPR Commission I on defense issues and increase public dialogue on these issues.

In order to stimulate a diverse and constructive debate in parliament on defense and security issues, NDI has agreed to support the Aksara Foundation's parliamentary advocacy program as well as a limited public education campaign on defense issues. With support from NDI, Aksara will engage DPR members and members of the public in discussions on defense and security issues and will advocate to Commission I through hearings, information dissemination and private consultations. In an effort to contribute to an informed dialogue on defense and security issues Aksara also will write and develop a special magazine insert for the weekly newsmagazine *Tempo*.

3. Discussions with Institute of Investigative Journalism (IIJ) to cooperate on Third Journalist Professional Development Program on Civil-Military Relations

NDI began preliminary discussions with IIJ on organizing a third Journalist Professional Development Program with a focus on investigative journalism. NDI and IIJ plan to conduct this training in late May 2001. The approach will be institutional and will target newspapers rather than individual journalists. One journalist and one editor from selected publications will be invited to participate in the program. NDI will assist IIJ in developing a training curriculum for this program and identifying possible trainers.

4. Disseminated Information on Proposed Defense Legislation to Journalists

Since its establishment, the e-mail group "waroeng-apoeng" has been a dynamic forum where alumni of NDI's journalist training program have been able to keep in touch, exchange thoughts and share information – articles by participating journalists are often critiqued through this list-serve. Using this list serve, NDI has continued to inform journalists of the legislative agenda – particularly as it relates to defense issues and the recently proposed legislation on defense. NDI has circulated both the text of the bill and analysis/commentary on the bill prepared by Indonesian experts. This information was particularly useful to journalists outside Jakarta who lack direct contact with DPR members, resulting in the publication of at least one article.

IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Program Assessment Mission and Regional Dialogue Feasibility Study

- Important feedback on journalist program received. This feedback will improve the implementation and planning of the third media training in May 2001.
- A realistic assessment of the current political situation and ascendancy of the military results in cancellation of regional dialogues.

2. Discussions with Aksara Foundation to engage in advocacy to DPR Commission I on defense issues and increase public dialogue on these issues.

- Finalized relationship between NDI and Aksara Foundation in the form of an MoU.
- Adapted Aksara activities to rapidly changing and fluid legislative agenda.

3. Discussions with Institute of Investigative Journalism (IIJ) to cooperate on Third Journalist Professional Development Program on Civil-Military Relations.

- Began to discuss the outlines of a relationship between NDI and the Institute of Investigative Journalism.

4. Disseminated Information on Proposed Defense Legislation to Journalists

- Valuable information on proposed legislation distributed to civil-military journalists.

V. EVALUATION/CONCLUSIONS

Objective: To increase Indonesian legislators' and their staff members' ability to understand defense and civil-military issues.

- NDI is supporting Aksara Foundation in its work to disseminate information on defense and security issues and educate DPR Commission I members on these issues through ongoing advocacy.

Objective: To increase the Indonesian media's capacity to understand and accurately report on defense and civil-military issues.

- Alumni of NDI civil-military journalist training receive information on proposed defense legislation through "waroeng-apoeng" list-serve group from NDI.

Objective: To increase Indonesian academic institutions' capacity to conduct research and education on defense and civil-military issues.

- None of the activities conducted in this quarter were directly related to this program objective.

Objective: To increase long-term dialogue and understanding between the military and members of civil society.

- None of the activities conducted in this quarter were directly related to this program objective.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

1. Legislative Activities

- NDI will organize a public debate on the Defense Bill possibly for television broadcast. This will allow for civil society to provide input and for legislators to prepare possible amendments through the DIM process (Daftar Inventarisasi Masalah-masalah) in the next legislative session.
- NDI will assist the Aksara Foundation to educate selected DPR members on defense issues to prepare them for the next stage of discussion and debate of the the Defense Bill.

2. Journalist Professional Development Program

- A third journalist training program is being planned with new partner Indonesian Institute for Investigative Journalism with a focus on investigative journalism.
- A series of informal dialogues between journalists, DPR members from Commission I and civil society members on the topic of the Defense Bill are planned for April.

3. Long-term dialogue and understanding between the military and members of civil society.

- In order to educate the public at large, Aksara Foundation will publish a special insert in Tempo magazine on defense issues.
- NDI will host a roundtable discussion with DPR members, members of civil society and the press on defense issues.